

MEMOIRS

CONCERNING THE

CITY

OF

DUBLIN,

In 1755 and 56.



Printed in the Year, 1757.

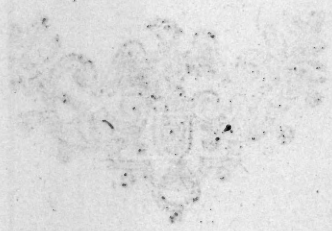
MEMOIRS

CONCERNING THE

CITY

OF

DUBLIN



Printed in the Year 1847

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THOMAS MEAD,

LORD-MAYOR,

TO

MICHAEL SWEENEY, and WILLIAM FORBES,

Esqrs. SHERIFFS.

AND TO

The Worshipful the COMMONS

and CITIZENS

of the City of *DUBLIN*.

These MEMOIRS are with

all Humility Inscribed.

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THOMAS MEAD,

LORD-MAYOR,

TO

MICHAEL SWINNE, and WILLIAM FORBES,

Esqrs. Sheriffs.

AND TO

The Worshipful the COMMONS

and CITIZENS

of the City of DUBLIN.

THE MEMOIRS are with

the Honorary Secretary.

MEMOIRS

CONCERNING

The City of *Dublin.*

WHETHER shall look studiously into the History of the great Cities of this Earth, their Situations, Constitutions, and Connections, their Growth, Vigour and Decay, will find therein much Matter of real Advantage and more Beauty in the moral Course of Things, than meets the Eye of a careless Observer: But he that goes to such Employment must carry with him some Knowledge of Man, a Knowledge as difficult and pleasing as the former, and almost as seldom attained: For to what Purpose wou'd it be to look into the Actions of a Number of Beings, to him who had no Knowledge of the Nature of any Individual. But the Knowledge

of Men is not to be attained from Books alone, nor from Meditation: It is to be had by mixing with and observing Mankind, neither looking always with a philosophic Eye into the Springs of Conduct, nor superficially judging from the first Appearances, but carefully observing and concluding from all Particulars compared together. Hence it is that Actors in the great Scenes of Life have ever been the best Historians, and from a Knowledge gained by their constant Observation of Particulars, have thrown strong and general Lights on the Transactions of their Times, which Men remote from the Scene could never do.

Great Cities subject to Kingdoms or Empires follow their Fates, which Fates are different as their Constitutions; some tumbling hastily like Buildings without solid Foundation, others crumbling as Houses of bad Materials, and others enduring to be the Envy of Time. Kingdoms or Cities constituted to enslave Mankind, are overturned by the Breath of Freemen; while such as are made for the Happiness of Men defy all Invasions, but of Wealth and Luxury. *Babylon, Persopolis, Balbec*, and all the great Capitols of despotic Eastern Kings, were the Seats of Nobles not inferior in Territory and Wealth to many Princes of *Europe*; they were built and maintained by the Spoil, not of Enemies, but of Subjects; all that could be drained from the poor Peasants was lavished on magnificent Palaces, Temples, Bridges and Towers; and, while these were the Admi-

Admiration of the World, the Possessors, a Mixture of oppressive Tyrants and desponding Slaves, were the Contempt of every little virtuous State.

Athens and *Carthage* arose on other Foundations; built in a barren Soil, by Wanderers subject to no Authority but what Wisdom and Virtue acquired; Arts and the Importation of Grain to Countries which themselves were fruitless, became immediately necessary to the Support of Life: Mutual Wants and Dependencies created mutual Equality; and superior Skill in removing Difficulties, supplying Exigencies and promoting the Happiness of the Community gave the only Title to Precedence: The Constitutions of these Cities were free, the Way to Honours was open; hence Wisdom presided in their Councils, and Valour led their Armies to the Field; they triumphed over Kings by their Virtue, in true Elegance excelled them, and were exceeded only in Luxury and its attendant Vices.

By like Freedom *Venice* grew in later Times; and *Florence* flourished like another *Athens*, till the invaluable Wealth and admirable Magnificence of *Cosmo* raised him above his Citizens, and the Prudence and Virtues of his Grandson *Lorenzo* almost reconciled them to the Power of a Sovereign; indeed the Weakness of his Son brought them back to their first Principles of distributing all Magistracies by the general Council of the Citizens; and referring all important Deliberations to select Councils deputed by the general Assembly; but in the Confusion of *Italy*
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the Family of *Medicis* reassumed its Power, and *Florence* again lost its Liberty.

London now the greatest, richest and freest City of *Europe*, grew like *Carthage* by Commerce; Equality among its Citizens produced Freedom in its Constitution, and its Freedom added Strength to the Kings of *England*, who in Return daily granted new Charters of Immunities and Privileges to increase its Greatness: It is a common Error that the Constitution of this City was given by Kings; the Kings of *England* have certain Royal Privileges which they may grant to their Subjects; these in the Hands of Subjects are called Franchises; of this Kind is the Privilege of uniting Men in one Body or Corporation to endure in perpetual Succession and to be known by a certain Name, as Mayor and Commonalty, or Mayor, Commonalty and Citizens; such only are Members of this Society as descend from those to whom the Grant was first made; or by Service in some Trade, or by special Favour are afterwards admitted: Therefore it usually happens that in Towns where these Corporations are, which are therefore called corporate Towns, not a fifth Part of the Inhabitants are Members of the Corporation, tho' the whole Town be subject to the Government of the Corporation. The Kings who can make these Grants, can also prescribe the Manner of electing the Officers of these Corporations, and the Powers they shall have. But the greatest Kings (conscious that these Royal Privileges are given them

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to distribute for the Promotion of Arts and Manufactures, and that the People are the best Judges what Powers are necessary to be velted in the different Parts of their little Communities for these Purposes,) have usually gone no farther than to unite the People of a City or Town by such a Name, leaving the rest to the People themselves: Such was the Case of *London*; the Traders of that great City were by several Kings united by several Names; the last Name by which they were distinguished was *Lord-Mayor, Commonalty and Citizens*: Thus united, they seem to have taken the Constitution of the Kingdom for their Guide in the Distribution of the Powers of the several Parts; and indeed that the Lord-Mayor should be the little King or Lord Deputy of the City, the Commonalty a select Council of grave discreet Citizens, and the Citizens a General Assembly to elect Magistrates, was so rational, that it is not strange that a free People agreed thereto without Debate. While the City was small, every Art or Trade deputed a Number to form the select Council of the Commonalty, and the Citizens in a general Body assembled to distribute the Magistracies. The Mayor had besides a Number of Aldermen to counsel and advise him: When the City became too unwieldy for Government without a Division into Districts, and Allotment of Officers thereto; the Citizens then thought it prudent that each District, according to the Extent and Number of its Inhabitants, should send a proportionable

Number of Citizens to form the select Council of the City, and also should send to the Lord-Mayor a Councillor called Alderman who should be Superintendant of the District which chose him: And that upon the Election of Officers, the Citizens (now grown extremely numerous) shou'd depute so many from every Craft or Art to form a General Assembly which should elect Magistrates for the whole Body. Such is the present Condition of *London*, moulded by the Wisdom of its own Citizens, framed originally and still maintained on those two Foundations, the Distribution of Offices by a general Assembly; and the Deliberation of important Matters by a select Body deputed by the General.

Dublin, the Capital of the Kingdom of *Ireland*, had, by the Grants of Kings, as large a Power of framing a Constitution for itself: It was united by the Name of *Mayor, Sheriffs, Commons* and *Citizens*: But a like Fatality which has attended the Constitution of the Kingdom attended that of the City, tho' proceeding from different Causes; the former from a settled Design of Sapping, the latter from a seeming Purpose of doing Good.

In the Year 1665, when the Protestant Religion was in its Infancy, (the *Marquis of Ormond* then Regent of *Ireland*,) an Act was made for the better Settlement of *Ireland*, in which a Power of regulating and settling the Corporations of the Kingdom was given to the Lord Lieutenant
and

and Council for seven Years; what the real Design of that Part of the Act was is not very clear; the Act was sent from *England* at a Time when *Charles* seemed leaning to Popery, and when his Brother was much suspected. *Ormond* made no Use of it; but *Berkeley*, who was a picked Favourite of the Duke of *Yorke*, no sooner received the Sword of *Ireland*, than he began to regulate the City of *Dublin*; immediately Letters came from the King, granting Indulgence to *Irish* Papists to live in Corporations; these were followed by other Letters approving the Nomination of Ten Papists to be Common-councilmen of *Dublin* by the Mayor's own Voice; and the Current was running so strong in Favour of Popery, that the Commons of *England* thought it necessary to interpose. *Berkeley* was recalled, and the Sword delivered to *Arthur Capel* Earl of *Essex*, a Man firmly attached to the reformed Religion, of good Understanding, which had been much better, if his Education had been good, but it was neglected during the Civil Wars, in which his Father fell: Of great Industry, and a Lover of the Liberty of Mankind; he landed in *Ireland* in *August* 1672, and the Power of regulating Corporations was to expire on the 29th of *September* following. His first Business was to hear the Complaint of the Recorder and some Aldermen, who in *April* preceding had been displaced by *Berkeley's* Lord-Mayor and a Junto of his Aldermen and Commons: When he had restored these, he abolished the Rules made by

Berkeley for regulating *Dublin*, and framed a new Set by which the Elections of the principal Magistrates were given to a few, subject to the Approbation of the chief Governor; by these Means securing to himself the Power of preventing Papists from enjoying such Offices. He prescribed the Manner in which the Council of the City should be chosen, and lodged as much Power as he could in the Hands of the Aldermen who were a Body of Council to the Lord-Mayor, and the greatest Part of them at that Time steady Es-pousers of the reformed Religion. Historians say, that he took great Pains to understand *Ireland* thoroughly, and governed it with great Integrity,

It is manifest from all the Uses made of the Power of regulating Corporations, that Religion was the Cause of giving it, and it was employed in Favour of the Popish or the Reformed, as the chief Governor was himself inclined. Had the reformed Religion been fully established here, there would have been no need of such Rules; *Essex* made them to weaken and disarm a Sect which was thought dangerous and destructive of the Liberty of the Country; he made them to strengthen the Reformists, who were then weak, not with a Design that Protestant should enslave Protestant: But when his End was answered, it was not easy to obtain a Repeal of them; so true it is that with the Causes the Effects do not always cease. The Power which a few had obtained

ed by these Rules, and by Usurpation was so great, that they could make whom they pleased Magistrates, appoint a Council for the City, and make Acts, and dispose of Revenues in the Name of the whole Corporation, tho' contrary to the Sense of Ninety-nine in an Hundred of the Free-men. Men of all Religions and Climates have an Appetite for Power, and willingly hold it tho' it be manifestly inconsistent with the Welfare of their fellow Creatures.

Dublin grew extensive and opulent, abounded with Protestants, and contained not less than 150,000 Inhabitants all subject to the Government of the Corporation, consisting of no more than 3,000; and yet the Government of this Corporation was in the Hands of 24, who were often governed by an illiterate cunning Clerk, dextrous in contriving and concealing little Artifices of enriching himself and the Junto by the Spoils of the City. Justice cou'd not be distributed but by dividing the City and allotting Magistrates to the Divisions; but no Divisions were made, and the whole was neglected: Riots were frequent, and Crowds of lazy Beggars, all the Filth and Nufances of the Kingdom infected the City: Magistrates were chosen from Connections of Blood, or Affinity; or from Kindred of Mind, not from Knowledge and Virtue; and to such Excess had Things proceeded, that at some Times Men illiterate, unknown even to read or write the Language they had been badly taught to speak, were promoted

moted to Offices; while improved Understandings and candid Minds were marked as dangerous, and unfit to be admitted to that Board of Ignorance and Cunning. In short the Citizens neither appointed their Magistrates, nor deputed their Councils.

In a Condition little better was *Dublin*, when *William Lord Cavendish* Marquis of *Hartington* was made Deputy in 1755, an Year that will not pass unnoticed in the History of *Ireland*: an Year full of Hopes and Fears, of Disappointments to many, and Wonder to all: which afforded a large Field of Observation to those who make Mankind their Study, and had very different Effects on Men who wish'd the flourishing Freedom of that Kingdom, and those who sought only private Emolument amid the Public Confusion. Even in this History of one Transaction of that Year, some Things may be thought deserving the Regard of those who shall hereafter aim at the Happiness of the City of *Dublin*.

The Spirit of the Parliament in the Year 1753 encouraged the People to hope for every thing Great in 1755: at the Head of a Majority of tried Men in Parliament were *Henry Boyle*, *Anthony Malone*, and *Thomas Carter*, all eminent; the First for his Connections and the Weight of his Friends; the Second for his Eloquence; and the last for Dexterity of Conduct. They were the Darlings of the People, who on every Election took all possible Steps to strengthen them:

them: Having the national Purse in their Hands, there was nothing useful to *Ireland* which they might not effect, and many Things the People were taught to expect. It was this favourable Face of Things which induced *Thomas Adderly* a Burgess of Parliament, who had often lamented the wretched Condition of this City, to request that some of his Friends would collect short Abstracts of the Constitutions of *Dublin* and of *London*; which they did with some Labour, tho' perhaps not without some little Inaccuracy. Having examined both attentively, they endeavoured to frame such a Constitution for *Dublin* as seemed to them to promise great and lasting Happiness to the City: and if the Plan was not drawn with that Exactness which is necessary in framing Laws, yet in the general Intention thereof it displeased very few. While they were thus privately engaged, the *Commons*, a Part of the select Council of the City, assembled to form a Petition to Parliament for a Regulation of their City; this alarmed some Gentlemen of the House of Parliament, who suspected that this was a Scheme promoted by the *Archbishop of Armagh* to attain Popularity to himself, a Thing which of all others they would grudge him most. In this View the ~~Speaker~~ placed it to Mr. A—— who answered him that he was a Stranger to the Design and Movements of the *Commons of Dublin*, but that he had an Intention of bringing into Parliament Heads of a Bill for regulating the City of *Dublin*, whether

Boyle
 ther it's Commons petitioned or not: that the Bill was ready, and he hoped Mr. *Richard B---e* would second him, by which means the Popularity of the *S---* and his Friends would be increased: The *S---* seemed much pleased with the Answer, and the same Day the Heads of the the Bill were sent to him. The City Commons not agreeing the first or second Day to any Scheme, Mr. *A---* sent the Plan already concerted, to an Assembly of the Citizens, who heard it with much Attention and Pleasure, tho' some there were who thought the Plan too large and the Design too great for Success; and others had too much Tendernefs for the present Constitution, and wish'd not to see it so totally changed: But all were pleased with the Regard shewn to the City, and grateful for the Labour which had been taken. After a few Days the Scheme was printed, and submitted to the several Fraternities or Gilds for their Judgment. All possible Arts were employed by a few to prevent the People from assembling, and the Presidents of some Gilds were induced to suppress the Plan; But the Multitude cou'd not be overpower'd. Tho' the Gilds were to loose by the Scheme, a very favourite Power, yet as soon as they were perswaded, that this Loss would be a general Good, Gilds met after Gilds, they read and examined the Plan, publickly approved it, and requested it might be proposed to the Parliament: And accordingly on the 22d of *December* 1755, Mr. *A---* moved the House for
Leave

Leave to bring in Heads of a Bill to regulate the City: but was privately desired by *Henry Boyle* the S——r not to introduce it till the Committee of Privileges and Elections had done sitting; for the Bill was displeasing to some Aldermen of *Dublin* who had Seats in Parliament, and espoused the Interest of the S——r, which was then the Interest and Dignity of this Kingdom; and if these Men shou'd desert him when he had Occasion for their Voices to Vote other Friends into the House, he wou'd never be able to make Head against the Party at Court, who were charged with Designs to enslave the Country.

In the mean time the Commons of the City proceeded in framing their Petition, which in the End proved to be a Petition in Favour only of themselves, who are but one Part of the Corporation; and the Citizens refused to sign, unless it was made more general; accordingly it was changed and calculated for general Relief. But still it differed widely from the Bill of Mr. A——; and many Persons leaning more to the Bill, than to the Substance of the Petition, Mr. A——, to prevent any Clashing, (where the Intention of all Parties was for a Change of the Constitution) introduced his Bill into the House of Commons, and then it became needless to petition, till a Petition was preferr'd against the Bill: Before the Bill came in, Mr. A——, in the Name of several principal Citizens, waited on the Speaker of the House of Commons to request that he would support the Bill with his whole Strength,

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and received for Answer, That the City should have his Voice, and that he would apply to his Friends. Mr. A—— had also presented the Scheme to the Marquis of *Hartington*, who said he wished the Citizens all Happiness, and would endeavour to promote it. After the Bill was brought into the House he again visited his Excellency, and presented it to him in the exact Form in which it lay before the Parliament. His Excellency observed, That of those who had mentioned it to him, some represented it as a Matter of such Importance, that it ought to stand over to another Session, and others thought it might be debated and settled in this, but the greater Number were for Delay. The Board of Aldermen certainly were amused with an Opinion of its being rejected or delayed by the Commons, for they concerted no Measures for a public Opposition: Some indeed were busy to insinuate that it was a Project of Dissenters, a Republican Scheme, and would introduce Confusion and Licentiousness; but these Artifices had been employed so often upon other Occasions, that they prevailed very little upon this.

The Citizens were induttrious to obtain what they had so long desired, and therefore neglected not to solicit such Persons as seemed most capable and willing to serve them: Among those applied to was Sir *Richard C—o—x* who spoke very highly of the good Intentions of the Lord Lieutenant, that he had in View a very generous Plan of taking away all the Franchises belonging to particular Persons in the City, which
caused

caused much Confusion, and *Imperium in Imperio*, and of subjecting the whole City to the Government of the Corporation; and that if the Matter was delayed till it could be more accurately digested and effectually executed, no Man wou'd promote it more zealously than his Excellency: for himself he said, the Citizens shou'd ever find him a Friend when it was in his Power to be so: Mr. ~~Carter~~ *Carter* express'd his Approbation of a Regulation, but recommended Delay till another Session less disturbed than this had been, when the Matter might be entered upon early and debated maturely. But the Citizens thought the present Time too favourable to be neglected, and steadily answer'd that they wou'd consider a Delay as a Denial: On Friday the sixth of *February* Col. *Conway*, Secretary to the Regent, told Mr. A—— that such Gentlemen as the Lord Lieutenant had mentioned the Bill to, seem'd to be of Opinion, that as nothing less than a total Regulation was thereby intended, and therefore of great Consequence to the whole City, it was a Matter which shou'd be well considered and properly digested; that as the Session was so much wasted, and yet much Business to be done, it wou'd be advisable to allow the Bill to lye over till the next Session, when it might be taken up and properly attended to, and then the Citizens wou'd find the Lord Lieutenant disposed to let it have a full and fair Discussion, and he wou'd be extremely ready and desirous to promote any Regulations that shou'd appear to be for the Advantage of the City. The Ci-

tizens were informed of this, but relying on the Justice of their Cause, they had no Reason to believe the Commons wou'd not find Time for a Matter which was allowed to be of so much Importance, and give it a full and fair Discussion without attending to the Dispositions of others; and therefore drew up their Reasons for withing it might not be delayed, which were these :

REASONS *inducing the Citizens to desire the Bill for regulating this City may be supported this Session, which Reasons Mr. A—— is desired humbly to submit to his Grace the Lord Lieutenant.*

' I. That the Citizens of this City have long
' laboured under the Oppression of a very un-
' equal unjust Constitution.

' II. That in this Session there was a Concur-
' rence of Circumstances so favourable as to
' leave them without Hopes of seeing the like, and
' without Excuse if they did not seek a Redress.

' III. That from his Grace the Duke of *Devon-*
' *shire's* approved Character, every Thing great,
' however arduous, was to be expected, and
' every Thing just seemed to be assured to them.

' IV. That the Generality of Gentlemen in the
' House of Commons, tho' differing on other
' Occasions, seemed to agree in this Point, that
' the Regulation of this Corporation was neces-
' sary, and ought to be encouraged.

' V. That the Aldermen, the only Persons from
' whom an Opposition might be expected, were
' divided

‘ divided among themselves, many tacitly approving a Change, and the rest from their Divisions fearing to oppose it openly.

‘ These Reasons induced and still induce the Citizens to desire the Bill may be supported this Session. It was early approved by the City, and prepared for the House before *Christmas*, and tho’ the Introduction of it was delayed at the Request of some leading Commoners, yet it has been three Weeks printed and submitted to every Member’s Examination. The Citizens cannot think without the greatest Regret, that the Capital of the Kingdom which has been so long governed by 13 Men, sometimes by a Sub-Sheriff who ruled those 13, should longer be subject to such unnatural Oligarchy, or more oppressive Despotism; and if their Hopes so highly raised by the Virtues of his Grace and the Parliament are now disappointed, what can they expect when Circumstances are less promising? When they reflect that a few Days Attention to this Bill might effect it, they cannot suspect that a Majority will not readily devote so short a Time to a Matter of such Importance: They believe that the Justice of their Cause will alone recommend it to his Grace’s Attention, and hope the Restoration of Security, Peace and Happiness to this great Capital will be no less honourable to his Name, than restoring the Cities of *Asia* was to the *Roman* Emperor’s who rebuilt them.

When his Grace had read them he smil’d, and with his usual Ease answered to the Effect
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of that which his Secretary had said before, that it was the Opinion of those with whom he convers'd, that it wou'd be better to delay it. The Citizens, notwithstanding, determined that the Delay shou'd not be promoted by them, and Day after Day, attended the House to hear the Bill debated, but still it was the last in the Course of Business; at length on the 13th of *February* Mr. *Perry* an eminent Pleader, moved the House that a Day might be appointed for considering the City-Bill, and that no other Business might interrupt it. And the 19th of the same Month was appointed. On the 17th Mr. *Conway* again urg'd Mr. *A*—— to perswade the Citizens to agree that the Bill should be postponed; Mr. *A*---- said he was but an Individual, and tho' he should even wish it delayed, yet he cou'd not direct the City, but must on this Occasion be directed by it. On the preceding Day Mr. *Anthony* *Malone* *M*-----, a Man of sound Sense, great Learning and nervous Eloquence, had desired to see some of the Citizens; and being attended by them, inform'd them that a Rumour was spread at the Castle, and by Mr. *C*----r, that they were content that the Bill should be postponed; with Surprise they told him, that their last Words to Mr. *C*----r were, *that they wou'd consider postponing as rejecting it*: Mr. *M*----e replied, he was glad the Mistake was rectified, and he wou'd be a Friend to the Bill. The 19th came, and the Bill was read thro'ugh, and the Consideration of it Paragraph by Paragraph adjourn'd to the 23d. It was expected that Opposition from some
Quarter

Quarter wou'd that Day be given, and Mr. Perry and others prepared earnestly to support the Bill. But instead of Opposition or Debate, an Air of Pleasantry spread thro' the House, and such an Emulation for Complaisance as afforded Matter of Entertainment to Persons no way interested in the Question; but had a very different Effect on many others. One Gentleman only spoke against it; urged thereto and espoused by Sir *Samuel Cooke*, the very Man whom the City had chosen some Years before to represent it in Parliament. Next Day the Bill passed thro' the Committee with Gravity, but little Debate; and being afterwards reported to the whole House and agreed to, it was transmitted to the Regent by Mr. A-----

That a Bill, which was allowed to be of as much Importance as any that had ever come into that House, should pass without Debate, and with very little Alteration, was an Appearance which raised various Conjectures: Bills the most accurately drawn suffer many Amendments from such Councils as the Parliaments of these Kingdoms. And Complaisance and Ceremony on such Occasions are like the Kiss of *Judas*. But all Things began now to wear a different Complexion; Voices that in a former Session were heard with Rapture on every public Occasion, were now not heard at all; and their Silence seem'd to prepare the Way for a new Scene of Conduct.

As soon as the Hopes of delaying the City Bill were laid aside, which had long prevailed, other
Devices

Devices were to be framed; for that a Bill on so free a Model should be sent to *England* never was intended. It had passed the Commons to the great Entertainment of some who smiled at the Concurrence of the House, for they had predetermined its Fate in that Part of the Government called the Privy-Council. Yet the Board of Aldermen had not been idle; after they found it had pass'd the Committee of the Commons, they had summoned their City Commons to petition against it: But thinking themselves secure, they neglected that Exertion of their Power, which they found afterwards to be necessary; for a Majority of their Commons were that Day against them; and the Mayor seemed satisfied that it was vain to attempt an Opposition to the Bill, declaring he would not convene the Commons a second Time: But the Bill was now before the Lord Lieutenant and his Council, and what could be done with it? To send a Bill from *Ireland* to *England* that breathed such Freedom to the City was a Thing unprecedented; and to send no Bill over, was an Omission which in the critical Circumstances of the Kingdom would not be forgiven. There was another Method and that succeeded; the Lord-Mayor was persuaded to summon the City-Commons a second Time, and use all possible Means to obtain a Petition in the Name (tho' contrary to the Sense) of the City against the Bill: This at least would give a Pretext for altering the Bill; and destroyed or altered it must be. His Lordship complied, summoned the Commons hastily and illegally; Debtors were taken
out

out of Jails to vote with the Board. His Lordship told the Commons *that in Consequence of a Conversation with the Vice-Roy* he had summoned them; and that their Business was to petition against the Bill which had passed the House of Commons: The Commons who favoured the Bill saw a Majority now against them, but being determined not to yield without Debate, they first read the Bill, and argued in support of it; *Matthew Weld* a noted Citizen spoke to the following Effect:

Gentlemen,

‘ The Question now proposed is the most extraordinary that, I believe, was ever sent by the Board to this House; it is so big with Insolence, with an Assurance of our Slavery and Dependence, that I am for treating it with just Contempt and adjourning without Debate upon it: But as many Gentlemen are inclined to have the Question determined, either from a more favourable Opinion of the Aldermen than I can entertain, or from a Deference to my Lord Mayor, and the Cause he assigns of this extraordinary Meeting; I cannot suffer the Question to be decided without giving my Sentiments, and justifying as well as I am able the Part which I shall act.

‘ Mr. *Sheriffs*, there never was a Matter before this House of so much Importance to this City as the Subject of this Day’s Debate; there is not a Person around me, not a Gentleman in the City, who will not confess that it is the most misgoverned City that ever contained an 150,000

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‘ Inhabitants : Health, Peace and Decency are
 ‘ so essential to the Happiness of Society, that
 ‘ it is a Matter of Wonder how it can subsist with-
 ‘ out them ; yet Nuisances, Riots, Crowds of lazy
 ‘ Beggars and unsightly Objects molest every Part
 ‘ of this neglected City : The chief Magistrate
 ‘ may be active, but what can one Magistrate do
 ‘ in so extensive a Town ? It is true, every Al-
 ‘ derman who has passed the Mayoralty is a Jus-
 ‘ tice of the Peace : But by what Steps does he
 ‘ come to this ? Who makes him first an Alder-
 ‘ man, and then a Mayor ? Not the City, but
 ‘ the Board : He feels therefore no Obligation
 ‘ to take Care of the City ; he is indebted only
 ‘ to the Board, and from the Interest of that he
 ‘ never swerves. But admitting, that in the pre-
 ‘ sent State of Things, there is one Alderman who
 ‘ regards the Well-being of the City ; yet he ne-
 ‘ ver can attend to the Peace of the whole, and
 ‘ having no particular District allotted for his In-
 ‘ spection, the whole will necessarily be neglected.
 ‘ Gentlemen, this City requires a Division, and it
 ‘ requires that Elections of Officers should be
 ‘ made by the several Wards or Parts into which
 ‘ it is divided ; every Officer will then have an Eye
 ‘ to his District, and the District to him : There
 ‘ will be an Emulation among Officers, and Dis-
 ‘ trict will vie with District in Order and good
 ‘ Government. In the present unhappy State
 ‘ there can be no Order, no Decency, no Emula-
 ‘ tion. It is not Gentlemen from Imagination,
 ‘ or even Conjecture founded on Reason that I
 ‘ argue thus ; it is from the best Lesson, Experi-
 ‘ ence.

' ence; *Rome* had its *Curiaë*, *London* has its
 ' Wards; when this City is divided in a like Man-
 ' ner, it will find like Effects: And I will be bold
 ' to say it can never become a peaceful, decent,
 ' happy City but by such a Regulation. A Bill
 ' for this Purpose has passed the House of Com-
 ' mons, and is now depending on the Pleasure of
 ' the Lord Lieutenant and Council; and at this
 ' Day, when the Bill has been some Months print-
 ' ed; in an undue and illegal Manner we are
 ' summoned to petition against it; to petition
 ' against the only Measure which, I think, can
 ' establish solid and lasting Quiet in this City.
 ' Consider Gentlemen by whom we are summon-
 ' ed; by the Aldermen, by the Men whose Abuses
 ' of Power, whose Usurpations of Power are to
 ' be affected by this Bill. We are summoned, as
 ' the Lord-Mayor tells us, *in Consequence of a*
 ' *Conference at the Castle*: Had he told us the
 ' Conference, we might have judged better,
 ' what respect should be paid to this illegal Sum-
 ' mons. We are called together to petition that
 ' this City may continue in its old Confusion,
 ' and that Aldermen may for ever oppress it, and
 ' assign its Revenues to their Children and Crea-
 ' tures.

' But, Gentlemen, I hope you will indulge me
 ' a little longer, on the Nature of the Bill now
 ' before us: It is calculated not only to divide
 ' the City and give to the several Divisions the
 ' Rights of electing Aldermen, but of appointing
 ' the Commons also; and every Ward is confin-
 ' ed to elect its Commons from the Residents of

‘ the Ward; so that every District will have a
 ‘ Number of Persons Inhabitants thereof, singled
 ‘ out by the District to take care of that in par-
 ‘ ticular and of the City in general. Gentle-
 ‘ men, the Commons are now very unequally di-
 ‘ vided among the Corporations; the Gild of Mer-
 ‘ chants appoints 31, I may say the Aldermen ap-
 ‘ point 31, for in the present Circumstances of
 ‘ that Gild, the Direction of it is in their Hands;
 ‘ the Number of all the Commons is but 96, and
 ‘ the Board makes 31 from a single Gild; this
 ‘ Day will, I fear, prove the Force of their Power
 ‘ in that Corporation. If, Gentlemen, the Alder-
 ‘ men make Aldermen and Commons also, what
 ‘ Constitution have you? The most oppressive
 ‘ that Tyranny could devise; An Oligarchy of
 ‘ 25, wanting only five to equal in Number, as
 ‘ in Power the famous Scourgers of *Athens*. Be-
 ‘ sides, Gentlemen, the Commons now, like the
 ‘ Aldermen, have no particular Object to attend
 ‘ to, no determined Part of the City allotted to
 ‘ their Care, therefore take no care of any Part,
 ‘ and the City is totally neglected.

‘ Before I leave this Part of the Bill, allow me
 ‘ to answer one Objection which is in the Mouths
 ‘ of many: That the Sheriffs are not, by this
 ‘ Bill, suffered to preside or make a Part of the
 ‘ Commons. Whoever reflects that if this Bill
 ‘ should become a Law, Men would be chosen
 ‘ Aldermen who had never been Sheriffs, will see
 ‘ that such Persons being afterwards made Sheriffs
 ‘ could not with Propriety preside among the
 ‘ Commons; for that an Alderman should preside
 ‘ in

‘ in our House, would be contrary to all the
 ‘ Rules of good Policy.

‘ The last Subject, Gentlemen, which I shall
 ‘ take notice of in this Bill, is the Provision for
 ‘ a Representative of the Citizens: It has been
 ‘ long contested, whether Commons and Citizens
 ‘ are Synonymous, or whether they mean two
 ‘ distinct Things. Tho’ I should argue against
 ‘ the Power of that Council of which I am a
 ‘ Part, yet I must confess that I think they mean
 ‘ distinct Bodies: In Corporations which I have
 ‘ heard of, where Commons and Citizens are
 ‘ mentioned as Parts, I find that Commons are
 ‘ Persons raised above the ordinary Sort, and
 ‘ designed for Offices of Trust: *London* has its
 ‘ Commonalty and its Citizens, distinct Bo-
 ‘ dies; its Commons for Offices of Debate and
 ‘ Trust, its Citizens for Elections. Agreeably to
 ‘ this Sense, Commons, I think, should be con-
 ‘ sidered by us; and in this Sense, as Men de-
 ‘ signed for Offices of Trust in this City, they
 ‘ take the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance.
 ‘ I do not wonder therefore that the Citizens
 ‘ should consider themselves as a distinct Body,
 ‘ and contend for every Power, every Right
 ‘ which is not legally taken from them. If they
 ‘ are not represented by the Commons, there
 ‘ is no Law which I know that makes the
 ‘ Act of the Common-council the Act of the
 ‘ corporate Body. If the Citizens were ori-
 ‘ ginally a distinct Body from the Commons, I
 ‘ do not apprehend that a By-Law could make
 ‘ the Commons a Representative of them, for
 ‘ that would be a By-Law destroying one Part
 ‘ of

' of the corporate Body, and By-Laws against
 ' Reason are, I am told, void in themselves.
 ' The People have incorporated *Ireland* by the
 ' Name of King, Lords and Commons, and gi-
 ' ven them their Powers; but should the King,
 ' Lords and Commons, make Laws to destroy
 ' the very Incorporation, to say the Lords should
 ' represent the Commons; they wou'd destroy
 ' that Body to which the People gave the legis-
 ' lative Power, and the People would, I appre-
 ' hend, be at Liberty to frame a new Constitu-
 ' tion. But be that as it may, Heart-burnings
 ' have long subsisted, and Questions at Law
 ' have been debated, for the Rights of the Ci-
 ' tizens, and are still undetermined; a Bill to
 ' regulate the City should remove these Heart-
 ' burnings; and this Bill, I think, has done so
 ' in a Manner the most effectual, by giving cer-
 ' tain Rights to a Representative of the Citizens,
 ' of voting at the Elections of the greatest Offi-
 ' cers of the City. To have left the Citizens
 ' still contending at Law, would have been the
 ' highest Negligence in the Regulation of the
 ' City, to have denied the Right which they
 ' now contend for, wou'd have caused more
 ' Uneasiness than at present subsists; it was
 ' therefore prudent to give them a Power, which
 ' indeed they ought to have, and which they can-
 ' not easily abuse. I have heard it objected a-
 ' broad, that such popular Elections, as this
 ' Bill prescribes, would be prejudicial to this
 ' City, and occasion Tumult and Neglect of
 ' Trade which we are not able to bear, tbo'
 ' London

' *London* may; but the Gentlemen who make
 ' these Objections either do not or will not
 ' know, that in *London*, where Elections are
 ' annually made by 6 or 7000 Persons, there is
 ' no Tumult and little Neglect of Trade: They
 ' do not consider that by this Bill there will not
 ' be at any Election 400 Electors, and perhaps
 ' they do not know that, (excepting the Elec-
 ' tions of Aldermen,) there will be no more
 ' Elections made by the several Wards than
 ' are now made by the several Gilds; For I
 ' need not inform you, Gentlemen, that upon
 ' the Death of one of this House, a Corpora-
 ' tion proceeds to elect another, and by this
 ' Bill the only Change is, that a Ward wou'd
 ' proceed to elect another. I have heard, Gen-
 ' tlemen, many other Objections, all calculated,
 ' insidiously calculated to mislead and divide us:
 ' It is the Interest of the Board to propogate
 ' any Tale that will answer that End: But,
 ' Gentlemen, it is our Interest to adhere firmly
 ' to what is Right: We are assembled here to
 ' petition against a Bill which ninety-nine in an
 ' hundred of the Citizens approve; let not forty
 ' or fifty among us so far gratify an usurping
 ' Board as to give a Colour which perhaps is
 ' fought for, of rejecting this Bill: Let it not
 ' be cast in our Teeth as an everlasting Reproach,
 ' that on the very Eve of the Happiness of this
 ' City we assembled to destroy it. Or if there
 ' be a Design to indulge this wise and virtuous
 ' Board, by agreeing to their Request, as I fear
 ' there is from some uncommon Appearances
 ' this

‘ this Day, at least petition to be heard by your
 ‘ Council against the Bill, that the Citizens may
 ‘ be heard by their Council against the present
 ‘ Administration.

Several argued against the Bill; they observed, that it had been a Custom Time immemorial for Aldermen to chuse one another, and that Customs like Laws, carried something sacred to them; that grievous Complaints had been made of the Gentlemen of the Board, but with what Justice they could not say, for in private Life they were as amiable as other Men, and they believed, as just in their public Character; that it was easy to lavish Abuse against the best of Men, and that this City was so unfortunate as to have in it discontented Persons of warm Imaginations, who like the Knights-Errant in Fables, sought after Difficulties, and took Shadows for Realities, and Realities for Shadows. That Riots sometimes happened, and Nuisances were sometimes to be met, but that every City was subject to these, and that more bad than good Consequences would arise from a Change, especially so great a Change of the Constitution, the smallest being always attended with some Confusion. That the lower Corporations would suffer greatly, and be drawn by Elections from Industry, and thereby the Trade of the City would be greatly injured. That this Bill had indeed passed the House of Commons, but hastily as they were informed, and that the Council would never pass it, therefore it became them to make the Government easy, and petition against it:
 ‘ That

That if an Alteration was necessary a much less would do. If it was so great a Grievance that Aldermen elected Aldermen, the Election might be given to the whole Common-council, and the Corporations be empowered to chuse their Commons without a double Return; but to make the Elections of Lord-Mayor, and of the Sheriffs who are Servants of the Crown, as popular as this Bill requires, would be raising a Spirit of Freedom that might end in Licentiousness. That they respected the Constitution of the City under which they had so long lived, and could not give their Vote for a Change of it, especially at this critical Time, when we are so alarmed by foreign Enemies.

The Question being loudly called for, *Thomas Read*, remarkable for his Uniformity of Conduct, concluded the Debate with a Speech to the following Purpose:

Mr. Sheriffs,

‘ I have sat long and heard many Debates in
 ‘ this House; I have seen of late great Struggles
 ‘ for Freedom in it, generous Attempts no later
 ‘ than last Summer to oppose all Usurpations of
 ‘ the Board; and my greatest Ambition was to see
 ‘ the Day when I should lose my Seat in this
 ‘ House, to make Way for the happier Govern-
 ‘ ment of the Corporation and City. But from
 ‘ all which I can observe this Day, my Ambition
 ‘ and the Hopes of all the Citizens are likely to
 ‘ be disappointed. If Justice, if Argument was
 ‘ against me, I should acquiesce without farther
 ‘ troubling you, but it is difficult to sit silent and

' hear Plausibility imposed for Truth. I shall
 ' not dwell on the Merits and Nature of the Bill
 ' which have been fully discuss'd by the Gentle-
 ' man who spoke first, but confine myself to the
 ' fair-seeming specious Arguments of those who
 ' have spoken since. A Gentleman has told you
 ' that he deems Customs and Laws sacred, and
 ' therefore I suppose would insinuate that they
 ' should be eternal and unalterable. While there
 ' is Reason, while there is Justice in either Cust-
 ' tom or Law, I hold it as sacred as he can; but
 ' as Circumstances vary, Things just and reason-
 ' able alter their Complexion, and often take a
 ' contrary; and Customs as well as Laws, being
 ' generally founded on a temporary Convenience,
 ' to suit a temporary Concurrence of Circum-
 ' stances; I hold them no longer just, no longer
 ' sacred than the Convenience and Circumstances
 ' continue. I am as little fond of Change as he
 ' can be, but I am always for changing for the
 ' better, which, if we change at all, we must now
 ' do, since we can hardly be worse.

' Says the Gentleman, we have Riots and Nu-
 ' sances, and every City has them; but let me
 ' ask him, Is there a City on the Globe which has
 ' them in such Degree? I have seen many, and
 ' some larger Cities than this; but in the largest
 ' I never observed, nor heard of as many Riots
 ' and Nufances, for many Years together, as are
 ' to be met with in this City almost every Month:
 ' Is there a Week, is there a Day in which nau-
 ' seous Objects, Heaps of Filth, or Crouds of
 ' unmerciful Rioters do not offend the Sight,
 ' pollute

' pollute the Air, or disturb the Peace of sober
 ' industrious Citizens? It is said this Bill will
 ' hurt the lower Corporations: What the Gen-
 ' tleman means by lower Corporations, or how
 ' it can hurt them, he best knows; but I could
 ' wish that he, and many others, would imitate
 ' the Virtue of one Corporation, I mean that of
 ' the Weavers, who, when the Scheme of this
 ' Bill was first proposed to them, though no Pro-
 ' vision was then made for those who lived in the
 ' County at large, yet generously declared they
 ' were content to lose their Voices, rather than
 ' oppose the general Good and Welfare of the
 ' City.

' The Gentleman has dwelt on the Praises of
 ' the Aldermen in their private and public Cha-
 ' racters; considering them as Men, I confess, I
 ' neither can, nor would contradict him; but as
 ' Aldermen abusing their Powers, continuing in
 ' Possession of usurped Powers, they deserve the
 ' Censure, the Odium of every Citizen. The
 ' Man who robs me of twenty Shillings is a
 ' Saint to him who spoils a whole City of its
 ' Rights and Franchises. It is a Custom of the
 ' Common-council, that no Petition shall be re-
 ' ceived, read or debated by the Commons, till
 ' an Order is made thereupon by the Board un-
 ' der the Penalty of Disfranchisement: Is this a
 ' Rule of *Effex*? No, a Rule of the Popishly
 ' affected Lord *Berkeley*, all whose Rules were
 ' absolutely annulled by *Effex* and the Council;
 ' but the Board saw it would be of Service, and
 ' took it with as little Ceremony as Justice: Al-

‘ dermen elect themselves; yet the first Charter
 ‘ which mentions Aldermen recites that they were
 ‘ elected by the whole Commonalty; and there
 ‘ is no Law in our Books which says it should
 ‘ be otherwise; yet the Gentleman thinks me fe-
 ‘ vere when I call them Usurpers.

‘ He says he respects the Constitution under
 ‘ which he has so long lived, and cannot give his
 ‘ Vote for changing it: So said the *Cappadocians*,
 ‘ the only People in History who when Freedom
 ‘ was offered to them petitioned that they might
 ‘ continue Slaves. If a Change says he, is necessary,
 ‘ a less will do: Let the Common-council chuse
 ‘ the Aldermen from the Sheriffs Peers: But who
 ‘ make the Sheriffs Peers? The Aldermen. The
 ‘ Common-council then must elect such Men to
 ‘ be Aldermen, as the Aldermen please to make
 ‘ Sheriffs Peers. He says further, let the Cor-
 ‘ porations chuse their Commons without a
 ‘ double Return to the Board: What mighty
 ‘ Advantage will this give? Will not the Board
 ‘ still have the Appointment of 31 Commons for
 ‘ the Gild of Merchants, and 48 Sheriffs Peers?
 ‘ What then would be gained by all this? A
 ‘ mere Shew, an Appearance of serving us with-
 ‘ out any Reality I will even admit that the
 ‘ Sheriffs (that Gentleman’s sacred Servants of
 ‘ the Crown) were also to be elected by the Com-
 ‘ mon-council; yet will the Quietness, the Health,
 ‘ the Happiness of the City be thereby provided
 ‘ for? Will there be one Nuisance, one Beggar,
 ‘ one Riot less than before? Will the Citizens,
 ‘ a fourth constituent Part of this Corporation,
 ‘ sit

‘ sit down contented to have no Power in the Corporation? He sees much farther than I can, who apprehends such Consequences.

‘ One Thing more which he observes is, that
 ‘ tho’ the Bill had passed the House of Commons,
 ‘ he was informed it would never be passed by
 ‘ the Lord Lieutenant and Council. I believe
 ‘ whoever informed him, hoped so: But I must
 ‘ say it is the highest Presumption in any Man
 ‘ to speak so severely of the Governor and Council;
 ‘ to say that the King’s Deputy, all the
 ‘ Right Hon. Lords and grave Judges would
 ‘ condemn what they have not seen, is so severe
 ‘ a Censure, that I am amazed how it can proceed
 ‘ from the Mouth of an Alderman’s Friend:
 ‘ But perhaps this is the little Artifice of some
 ‘ narrow-minded Man, who by alarming your
 ‘ Fears of loosing all, would induce you to accept
 ‘ of any Thing. Gentlemen be not deceived;
 ‘ every Engine is employed to seduce,
 ‘ to mislead you; you are told, that this Bill is
 ‘ framed on the Constitution of *London*; and,
 ‘ that *London* is dissatisfied with its Constitution:
 ‘ That the King should have been addressed
 ‘ before an Attempt of this Kind was made.
 ‘ Gentlemen, if *London* is dissatisfied, it is because
 ‘ Aldermen have any Power: The King
 ‘ has been addressed, most dutifully addressed:
 ‘ and has graciously received the Addresses of
 ‘ the Citizens, but the King alone cannot redress
 ‘ our Grievances: no Charter can destroy
 ‘ a Statute; we are enslaved by the new Rules,
 ‘ and the Parliament only can relieve us: the
 ‘ Commons

' Commons have testified their Readiness; and
 ' the Lord Lieutenant will, I doubt not, act a
 ' similar Part, tho' the Arts and Perswasions of
 ' the Board should influence so this Day to pe-
 ' tition against the Bill; the Voice of Thousands
 ' must be heard. And will any Gentleman call
 ' the regular Complaints of this great City for
 ' many Years, mere Heats of Enthusiasm and
 ' Ambition; They are the cool Effect of Reason
 ' and Resolution; of Reason not to be warped by
 ' Flattery, and Resolution not to be intimidated
 ' by Threats. Says the Gentleman, this is
 ' a critical Time: we are in Danger from fo-
 ' reign Enemies: is it then a Time to continue
 ' Oppression at home? Men are not yet arrived
 ' to that Degree of Virtue to love those who per-
 ' secute them: if it be indeed a Season of so
 ' much Danger as some Men's Fears suggest; it
 ' is Time to unite; but there can be no Union
 ' without Affection. — Several spoke in an-
 ' swer to this but offered nothing new.

The Debate was not without Use, for tho' up-
 on a previous Question concerning the Legality
 of the Summons, there was a Majority of 12
 in Favour of the Board, yet after the Debate,
 there appeared only a Majority of two to peti-
 tion against the Bill; The Petition was suddenly
 framed, and carried by the Mayor attended by
 a few of the Board to the Regent: Immediately
 the Citizens assembled and framed a Petition in
 favour of the Bill, and determined to go in a
 Body to present it, and thereby shew his Grace
 the Regent that it was not the Desire of a Ca-
 bal, nor of Men afraid or ashamed to appear
 ' publickly

publickly in Defence of what they privately wished: How it came to pass that Mr. *Read* (who had ever been foremost on such Occasions) was not singled out to present their Petition, is yet uncertain; Many hundreds crowded to the Castle; The Regent received them with Affability, said he would lay their Petition before his Council, who better understood the Affairs of this City than he could possibly, and what they advised should have his Concurrence; with this Answer they departed. Notwithstanding this Petition the Council sat down to form a new Model, and while they were thus employed, others were industrious to create a Stillness and Quiet among the Citizens till the new Device shou'd come from the Council; The Secretary of the Regent was not the least industrious in Closetting, nor the least angry to find himself discovered.

The new Bill came and did not contain a line of the former; yet many Agents were assiduous to commend it, urging how impolitic it wou'd be not to accept even of a little, as it wou'd lay a Foundation for asking more; and this Way of arguing had its Effect upon so many, that it was necessary some Measures should be taken to prevent the Acquiescence of the City to a Bill, which would make its Government little better perhaps worse than it was: The Fraternity of *Hofiers* immediately step'd forth, examined this new Piece of Cookery, exerted their Right of judging and censuring Laws while they are only in Agitation, and particularly such as are
imme-

immediately to affect their Rights and Franchises, and openly declared it an unsatisfactory Bill. The Novelty of this Measure surpris'd some, and pleas'd others; little Agents were industrious to lay hold of the Surpriz'd, and by dreadful Apprehensions turn their Surprize into Fear; they represented it as wrong to mention the Privy-council, dangerous to form an Opinion of its Actions; as if it had a judiciary as well as a legislative Power, they whisper'd that the Fraternity would be called to answer to the Council, and spoke of it as of a Star-chamber in its Meridian of Power. The Mayor recommended Caution to the Printer, insinuating that what he had published was construed a Libel, and might be fatal to him; The Printer answer'd, That many eminent Lawyers had declared the contrary, and therefore he had published it.

But all did not intimidate other Fraternities and Societies from doing the like, tho' some who before were strenuous against the Bill grew indifferent and careless of it's Fate: Great Industry was used also in the House of Parliament to convince the Commons that this privy Bill was agreeable to the Citizens. Some Members, who saw the contrary, advis'd the Citizens to petition against it: a Petition against it was accordingly drawn and signed by several Hundreds: a few step'd forth openly and fram'd a Petition in favour of it; but tho' aided by the Lord-Mayor and others; and tho' they had Agents in all Quarters of the Town to get Persons to sign blank Sheets, which when fill'd,

were

were to be annexed to the first Sheet containing the Petition, but with all their Management they cou'd not influence an Hundred to sign it. Small as the Number was, they had Courage to prefer their Petition on the Day the Privy Bill was read. Mr. *Eyre* immediately prefer'd a Counter-Petition, signed, as he said, by Hundreds of his Majesty's most loyal uninfluenced Subjects of the City of *Dublin*. As soon as the Bill was read, Mr. *Lehunt* having prefac'd pompously in favour thereof, but more in favour of the Lord-Mayor and some others who petitioned for it, moved that it should be committed and examined Paragraph by Paragraph; but the House differed from him, and refused to commit it, as it was so far from agreeing with the Bill which they had pass'd, that it even had a different Name. Mr. *Perry* afterwards moved that it should appear on their Books as a rejected Bill, calling it the Work of low Cabal; and the whole House, Mr. *L——t* excepted, agreed to the Motion: Thus ended this Year the Scheme of regulating the City of *Dublin*.

The Relater of these Facts knows how frequently and how improperly Reflections of the Tellers are intermixed with their Stories; yet he ventures here to make one, and that a short Observation: He undertakes not to censure any particular Parts of the Bill, but the Proposal of the Whole at once; had only a Part been proposed at the first, it might have been obtained; and when the City was reconciled to

one Change, that Reconcilement would have aided the obtaining another Regulation, and so by Degrees the whole Bill might have been procured.

It had been at the first Introduction represented in the House as a Matter in its Importance inferior only to a Regulation of the national Constitution; and in its Conclusion it seems so much to have contributed to a Design of that Kind, that I cannot omit reciting what immediately followed the Rejection of this new Bill of the Privy-Council. It had affected some Gentlemen very strongly that the Privy-Council should undertake totally to alter the Bills of the House of Commons, and send over to the King Bills or Petitions of Redress quite different from those which the People presented. It was a Power if legal, that must be prejudicial to the Liberties of the People, and so far it was against the great Law of Reason; and it might in its Consequences prove fatal to the King. They consulted the Laws relative to the Power of the Council, the Laws of *Poynings*, and of *Philip* and *Mary*, and believing no such Thing was warranted by them, or any subsequent Statute, on *Wednesday* the _____ of *May*, Mr. *French*, prefacing his Motion with the Respect that should be had to the Dignity of that House and to the Welfare of the Kingdom, represented how greatly both might suffer, if the Council should exercise a Power, not warranted by the Constitution, of sending only such Bills and in such

such Manner to the Throne, as they thought proper; and moved that the Clerk of the Council might lay before the House Copies of all the Bills transmitted by the Council to *England*. Mr. *A. Malone* spoke in favour of the Power of the Council, as a Body fit to be trusted therewith, being bound by Oath to do Justice, as entitled to that Power by the Constitution, and with great Exertion of Language represented it as dangerous, little less than Capital to attempt a Change. This roused Mr. *Perry*, who with no less Strength of Argument, denied the Power to be legal, though exercised, and declared that however dangerous an Attempt might be painted to wrest that Power from them, yet, could he have Hopes of Success, he would risk Fortune and Life in the Attempt. The Injustice of the Power affected almost the whole House, and the Question being put on Mr. *French's* Motion, so many agreed with him that last of all Mr. *M——e* went over to his Side, and none were left for the Negative.

On Thursday the Gentlemen who had succeeded by a kind of Surprize, determin'd to push the Matter farther; The Clerk attended with the Bills transmitted to *England*, but the Consideration of an Address of Thanks to the Duke of *Devonshire* engaged that Day, and the Bills were not delivered. The next Day the House had no material Business, and it was ar-

dently

dently expected that the Bills wou'd be deliver-
 ed by the Council's Clerk, Enquiry made
 how many had been suppressed by the Privy-
 Council, and some Resolutions enter'd into as a
 Foundation for Proceedings in another Session;
 but the Speaker when call'd upon at two o'Clock
 to take the Chair, left the House and returned
 not till five Minutes before Three. He had
 scarce sat down when Mr. *Conway* rose and told
 the House that his Grace the Regent in Answer
 to their Message had desired they wou'd wait on
 him with their Address at Three. Mr. *French*
 snatch'd the few remaining Minutes, had the Clerk
 call'd to the Bar of the House, and all the Bills
 delivered; and moved that the House shou'd ad-
 journ for half an Hour, in which Time they might
 wait upon his Grace. Mr. *M——e* opposed
 this Motion, alledging the Hardship of meeting
 so late in the Day when it did not appear that
 any Thing material was to be done; Mr. *French*
 replied that he had Matters of the greatest
 Consequence to the Dignity of that House and
 the Welfare of the Kingdom to lay before them:
 To which Mr. *M——e* said that Matters of
 Consequence could best be considered in the
 Morning; and after an Alteration of half an
 Hour, and a Division upon the Question in
 which 43 were for meeting that Day, and 105
 against them, the House was adjourned to the
 next

next Day, the Day on which the Regent was to go to prorogue the Parliament.

The next Day came, and the Speaker being call'd upon after one o'Clock to take the Chair, retired again to his Chamber, and return'd not till a little before Two to the Chair. Several little Matters took up the Time of the House nearly half an Hour; after which Mr. *French* began, but having referr'd to some Things said by Mr. *M——e* in a preceding Debate, he was by that Gentleman twice interrupted as not speaking agreeably to the Orders of the House; he proceeded afterwards a very little Way when having mention'd that four most material Bills had been stopp'd by the Council, he was interrupted by Sir *R-----d Cox* who said the House had yet no Evidence of that Matter, and therefore he moved, that the Heads of all the Bills sent by the Commons to the Council should first be read, then the Heads of all the Bills sent by the Council to *England*; when he ended, Mr. *French* proceeded, but was afterwards six times interrupted by the same Knight, still insisting that the Heads of all the Bills should be read before Mr. *French* shou'd be allowed to say that four had been destroyed. The Sound of the Regent's Drums at length reached the House, and then Mr. *Conway* his Secretary rose and said he believed there would be no Impropriety if Mr. *French* was allowed to proceed before the
Heads

Heads of the Bills were read, for if his Motion proved to be such as required a Reading of them, they must certainly be read before the Motion cou'd be disposed of. He had scarce sat down when the Commons were called to the Upper House, and immediately the Parliament was prorogued,

The **E N D.**



